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New Web site offers information for those who suffer from cancer pain

The Michigan Cancer Pain Initiative has opened a new website for the organization whose mission is to help people suffering from cancer pain and those who support them.

Located at www.mipain.org, the site offers resources for those suffering from pain, health care providers and policymakers. While it does not provide individualized health care advice, it equips patients and families to ask the right questions and advocate for relief of their pain more effectively.

"This is a comprehensive, interactive Web site devoted solely to cancer pain management," said Dr. Karen Ogle, MCPI President and MSU professor. "It includes resources for patients and their families, as well as information for policymakers and advocates." She described the under-treatment of cancer pain in the United States as a "serious health care crisis."

"Untreated and under-treated pain can cause profound suffering, with effects that go beyond the physical body to reach the psychological, spiritual and social dimensions of people's lives as well," she said. "Pain is about more than physical distress. It creates stress, and can interfere with sleep, concentration, and a person's ability to perform and enjoy everyday tasks. It can even weaken the body's defenses against illness."

The Web site provides links to numerous resources, including those dealing with various palliative care options, patients' rights, and complementary and alternative medicine. It also offers valuable information for all health care providers, and it gives easy access to sign up for free membership in MCPI or to receive the newsletter from the MCPI.

"Treating pain is a team effort," Dr. Ogle said. "That's a message the medical community has taken to heart, improving on the ways in which physicians and nurses, as well as social workers, counselors and spiritual care providers, work together to relieve pain and manage other troubling symptoms."

The Web site was made possible through funding from the Lance Armstrong Foundation and the Alliance of State Pain Initiatives.

The MCPI is an association of health professionals, patient advocates, and representatives of clergy, government, and higher education, dedicated to addressing the problem of unrelieved pain from cancer. MCPI is partnered with the Great Lakes Division of the American Cancer Society and is a member of the Alliance of State Pain Initiatives.

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